

A
VV O R D
(22)
TO THE
S A I N T S
FROM THE
Watch Tower.

By a Faithful Embassadour,
In Bonds for the Gospel divers
years, F. H.

LONDON:
Printed in the year 1668.

AVO R D

THE

SAINTS

FROM THE

AVO R D



By a Faithful Engraver
In Bond for the Gold Divers
JAMES H. H.

LONDON:

Printed in the Year 1800



Cambridge-Castle 27 Decem. 1667.

TO THE
Faithful Brethren in Christ
IN L O N D O N :

FRANCIS HOLCROFT

*Wisheth Grace, Mercy, & Peace,
from God our Father, and the
Lord Jesus Christ.*

BEing in the morning before
the Throne of Grace ye-
sterday, seeking the face of
God, the word of God
came with power to my Soul, with
respect to the Church of God here.

and all the *Israel* of God with us in the Land : *Ezra* 9.8,9: It's said before, *Since the days of our Fathers, we have been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our Iniquities both we, our Kings, our Priests, have been delivered into the hands of the Kings of the Lands, to the Sword, to Captivity, and to Spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day :* (Which hath been now our case for about seven years, but that in part onely, for how marvelously hath our God, through this time of our affliction and confusion of face, stayed the rough Winds and Storms of Persecution, by one or other wonderful and remarkably wise and gracious work in his Providence and Administration of things in the world.) But as if that were not enough for us, a sinful People of his, Mark what our gracious God speaks by his providence and work to us *at this time*, and that in this word I mention,

mention, Vers. 8, 9. And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a Remnant to escape, and to give us a Nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage, for we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy to us in the sight of the Kings of Persia, to give us a reviving to set up the House of God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a Wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

Having had many thoughts touching this word of God, and the grace of God towards us his People therein declared for the help of our Faith: I found upon further consideration, that it may be you, my dearly beloved Brethren in Christ, both the Prisoners of the Lord with you, and all the rest, are in an especial manner concerned in this word; and that for

much as *this* grace hath been now for some time past given you from the Lord, since the fearful Judgements of God by Plague and Fire have brake out on you. I say, *grace* hath been shewed you from the Lord, to enjoy greater Liberties than your Brethren; and again, our God hath brought you to see somewhat of the glory of the solemn Assemblies, for which you that are Mourners have been sorrowful; our God hath in some measure been gathering you, & bringing you again, the Ministers of God, and others, to the places of concourse. God hath opened a wide door to some of *You*, which our God make *yet more and more effectual*; for which things we your Brethren, I hope many of us in the Countrie, in Prisons, and others, have and do rejoyce, blessing God by Jesus Christ.

I thank our God, I have at some times, on the *Lords Days* especiallie,
 been

been at libertie in my Soul; being present in spirit with you somewhat in your Solemn Assemblies, rejoicing with you in this Mercie, brought to you by so wonderful a hand of our God.

Now observe the Language the Holy-Ghost here useth to set out this thing.

Now for a little space GRACE hath been shewed from the Lord our God: Mark that word Grace, and that from the Lord our God: Its the language of Ezra, by Faith laying hold of the everlasting Covenant of Grace, on the behalf of Gods own People. Under the Law God spake so to his people, Lev. 2. 13. And every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt, neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the Covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering; with all thine offerings shalt thou offer Salt; and so up and down in the Word, we

find

(6)

And the holy men of God in their Prayers and Preaching, their spiritual offerings, offering Salt, even the Salt of the Covenant of their God, as *Ezra* here, *Grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God; whose Covenant is this, I will be their God, and they shall be my People, saith the Lord.*

Now I desire that you and we may by Faith wrought by the Spirit of grace, favour more the grace of this gracious dispensation of our God and Father; *Grace hath been shewed us from the Lord our God in it.* There is in it especial favour of grace; grace flowing from the Covenant of grace, where our God is making known to the Elect, called Heirs of Promise, the immutability and unchangeableness of his Counsels and eternal purposes of grace, Liberty and reviving in Bondage, given as a fruit of grace, and given

(7)

with the grace and shinings of the face of God, is a mercy indeed; such as the world have not, they know not what it is.

Now (My Brethren) you know the grace of the Covenant of grace, was made known graciously in the in the first Testament. But now in the new and better Testament, whereof our Lord Christ is the Mediator, the Son of God himself, Grace is more abundantly made known by Jesus Christ; the great design of the Gospel of God, being the manifestation of *the glory of the onely begotten Son of God, his Beloved in whom he is well pleased*, and so the love also with which God hath loved his Elect, who are by the Father, given to Jesus Christ, of whom the Lord Christ thus speaks, *Iohn 17. That the World may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.*

Now

Now the God of all grace, pour out richly on you, and us, at this season, through our Lord Jesus, the Spirit of grace and supplication, that he may fill our hearts with the Faith, and sweet Saviour of this grace of God, shewed to Gods people at this time.

I was glad to observe of late, what is said of Holy Mr. *Rutherford* (one who faithfully testified and defended in his Generation, the Doctrine of the Gospel of the grace of God) It's said that when the Lord at the beginning of these times, took him to himself; on his death-bed he had on his heart, in some especial manner, a desire, that all the Saints might instantly wrestle with God for the pouring out of the Spirit of grace & supplications, according to the Promise, *Zach. 12. 10*. Thus shall great godly sorrow, working repentance

(9)

tance, never to be repented of, be
given ~~to the House of~~ David and In-
habitants of Jerusalem, both Jews
and Gentiles in the last dayes, who
shall wail over Christ, whom they
have pierced, even all the Kindreds of
the Earth, even so Amen. Thus
our Back-slidings from our God,
and our Breaches amongst our selves
shall be healed, as it's said by the
Prophet Jeremiah, Chap. 50. In
those dayes and in that time, saith the
Lord, the Children of Judah shall
come, they and the Children of Israel
together, (amongst whom there had
been much bitter and lasting strifes,
for ages and generations) they shall
come, going and weeping, they shall go
and seek the Lord their God: they shall
ask the way to Zion, with their faces
thither-ward; saying, Come, and let
us joyn our selves to the Lord in a per-
petual Covenant, that shall not be for-
gotten.

(Holy

(Holy Brethren) Let our hearts, desires, and prayers, be instant with the Lord still, that *this grace* shewed us from our God, may teach us to deny those worldly Lusts, and Covetings, and ungodliness, for which our God hath thus wasted us; and that we may be more taught now by the *grace* of God, that brings Salvation, the grace by which we are saved (that which the Holy Ghost calls *ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτηρία* , The grace of God that is saving; or that brings Salvation) By grace, saith the same Apostle again, *are you saved*, (2 Eph.) and also by this grace of God, in giving us this reviving, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, waiting, and looking for the Blessed Hope, and the glorious appearings of the great God and our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

But I pray let us return again to the Word of God. *Now for a little space grace hath been given us from the Lord our God, to leave us a Remnant to escape, and to give us a little reviving in our Bondage.*

Further, Observe this word *little*; and weigh it well: It is here twice repeated. And therein our God as by a Watch-word, speaks to you in London, and to us all (for I am prone to hope that this grace may yet reach further to you, and to your Brethren, then yet it hath done) this *grace* given he speaks of, is but for a *Little Space*, and to give us a *Little reviving in our Bondage*, in brief thus. I have not been alone perswaded of it from sundry weighty grounds, taken from the word of God, that the fiery Tryal that waits yet for us is not over, yet are the ways of our God in the deep.

deep; and he oft repents him graciously of the evil he threatens; and so I or others, I judge, ought not to speak peremptorily in these secret things which belong to God. But I oft have thought that word of God is for us, that in *Ier. 9.* after the Prophet had cried out, against the great sins of Gods own Children, *vers. 7.* saith thus, *Therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts; Behold I will melt them, and try them: for how shall I do for the Daughier of my People?* But now as the Lord speaks by another Prophet, *And because I will do thus, prepare to meet thy God O Israel.* I am prone to think and believe, that grace is now given us in this little space and little reviving from our Bondage that is come, and may be yet coming: *For this very end, that Israel may be prepared to meet God in that fiery Tryal that may yet be, viz. An hour of darkness, before the utter downfa*

downfall and judgment of the Whore,
 which also hasteth greatly; when God
 shall avenge the blood of his Ser-
 vants at her hand; after which, there
 shall be heard as the voice of many
 waters (*viz.* Peoples and Kindreds)
 Saying, *Alleluja*, for the LORD
 GOD Omnipotent reigneth, as saith
 the Apostle *Iohn*, Rev. 19. Then
 God will hasten the Coming in of
 that fulness of the Gentiles, which
 shall be before the Jews be converted,
 For blindness (saith the Apostle
Paul) in part is happened to Israel,
 until the fulness of the Gentiles be
 come in; and so all Israel shall be sa-
 ved: And the fulness of the Jews
 (*Rom. 11.*) shall be also the Riches
 of the Gentiles, as was their Fall and
 Diminishing: Then the Kingdoms of
 this world shall become the Kingdoms
 of our Lord and Christ; and he shall
 Reign for ever and ever. And after
 this spreading of the Kingdom of

(14)

God, and the *Grain of Mustard-Seed*, (to which the Lord Christ compares his Kingdom) shall be grown; and that *Least of all Seeds* shall become the *Greatest* among Herbs, and become a Tree, so that the Birds of the Air come and lodge in the branches thereof,

After this shall come, as it is written, *The Time of the Dead, that they should be Iudged; and God shall Give Rewards to his Servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and to Them that Fear his Name, small and great; and he shall Destroy them that corrupt the Earth.*

Till which time of the Resurrection of the Dead, and of the Eternal Iudgment, I thank God I dare not, I do not, (with Gods Church of old) look for any Personal appearing of Christ: For any Third Personal
Coming

Coming of the Son of man on Earth; which I judge to be as Apocryphal, and a dangerous Error touching those grand Fundamental Principles of the Oracles of God, *viz.* The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead, and of the Eternal Judgment, *Vnto them,* (saith the Apostle) *that Look for him, shall He Appear the second time without sin unto Salvation.*

Dangerous and contrary to Scripture it is, to expect any end to be put to the Ministration of the Spirit, the Comforter, in this World; before the End of it: He is now now come; now Iesus, the other Comforter, is Gone away; and now He (the Spirit on earth) continueth to bear witness with the Water and with the Bloud; *For these three bear witness* (saith the Apostle *Iohn*) *on earth, And they agree in one.* I say, danger-

(16)

ous is it to suppose a Coming of the Son of Man in Person , that either shall not put an end to the administration of the Lord (the Spirit) here in the Church, (see *1 Tim. 6. 14.* and *1 Cor. 11. 26.*) or that shall put an end to it before That moment the Apostle Paul speaks of , when *the Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the Harvest comes* which Christ calls the end of the World ; how unsafe, I say, either of these Assertions be, let those that fear God judge, *viz.* the Children , to whom it is given to understand the *Mysteries* of the Kingdom.

Now (dearly beloved Brethren) let us mind what now lies before us ; and whatever our hand finds to do, in this little space of *reviving from bondage*, let us do it with all our might ; for I am prone to think the

night comes again, wherein little work will be done.

Now I shall conclude in the name of our Lord Christ, earnestly admonishing you to redeem this season of Grace.

Let the Ministers of God, the Dressers of Christs Vineyard, that have by Jesus Christ prevailed for the Fig-Tree, that it should not be Cut down, but be let alone this year also; Let us (Brethren) call to mind our Vows and Promises in the dayes of our wrestlings; how that if God would trust us again with an Harvest-Season, that we would be more Faithful and Laborious, &c. So in the Parable, saith the Dresser of the Vineyard, *Lord let it alone this year also, till I Dig about it, and Dung it*; which was a kind of Promise to God: As if he should say, Ah Lord!

Let it yet alone, and how will Labour
and Dig about it ; and Dung it, &c.
And then Let all the Saints, and also
the Land, Mind what follows : *And
if it Bear Fruit, Well ; (Well indeed !)
and if not* (saith the Dresser, who be-
fore prayed for it) *Then after that
Thou shalt Cut it Down: And there will
be then No remedy.*

Now to the end we may wisely
improve this Gracious Space of *re-
viving from our Bondage*, that is by
grace given us ; I beseech you, (as a
Worker together with the Lord and
his Ministers) that you Receive not
This Grace of God in Vain : Let's
mourn for All the *past Grace* that we
have received in *vain* ; and Watch
how we *receive*, and *learn by this
Grace* that hath been shewed us from
the Lord : To *Him* let our eyes be,
beyond all *Instruments* ; Let us, I
say, Learn Holiness and Godliness,

And

And that we may herein be furthered,

Consider for what Ends our God may Vouchsafe us *this Breathing*: Call to mind what I said partly before, that our Father seeing, how Back-slidden, how Luke-warm we are, how unaccustomed to his Yoke, and Cross; and how Averse we have shewed our selves to bear them; how ready to walk after the Carnal Imaginations of our Own hearts; He will give us a Little reviving in our Bondage, to further the Reviving of our Souls by Faith and Sound Repentance, and Recovering; that thereby our first Love may be restored, and that we may be put into Heart for the Storm that is Coming; for it will put All that is within us to it: If the Righteous shall be therein Scarcely saved, where then shall the ungodly

ly and Sinners appear, even, when this Judgment shall again begin at the House of God ?

Beware of False Mistaken Prophets, that say, the bitterness of death in these things is over, least you find at last they Bite with the Teeth, though you now love to hear them cry to you, Peace, Peace. There hath been too much of this daubing with untempered Mortar already: The Lord Spare us:

Here is more than two years, and an half, twice told, passed over us, since our Affliction began: and yet I think we hardly judge the Witnesses are yet risen. And how many then, herein already, have been found false Witnesses, that have presumed far and much about Set times, see you to it.

In this season, Cry out in the Spirit every

every one, O spare me that I may recover strength, before the evil day come ! How loud doth God call in that word to us, in the words of the Prophet, *Ier. i 2. If thou hast run with the Footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with Horses ? And if in the Land of Peace wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee ; then How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan ? The Race with the Horsemen, and the Swelling of Jordan are yet (I judge) to come : And now a season is given you to prepare for them, improve it ; and with dread call to mind how many have in these Nations, by as it were the very Looking out of Tribulation, not only been found fainting too much, which Gods Own must Mourn for ; but they have been Tired outright, and are turned Apostates, Perjured, Covenant-Breakers, Prophane, and Superstitious, &c. and that*

that after Enlightnings;

Furthermore (Brethren) to the end you may husband and improve this *little space* aright, Mark in the Text for what ends there mentioned, it is Given to us, as to them of old; and Let us See to it, that we do not forget or over-look them, and trifle about them. *Now for a little space* (saith he) *Grace hath been given us from the Lord our God, to leave us a Remnant to Escape.* Call to mind the time, when not so long since, you lay in fears in your Beds, night by night, because of the Fury of Bloudy Papists, as if they were ready to destroy: and Where is the fury of those Enemies? How doth God at present Say to the Floods of the Ungodly, Stand still? *The captive Exile hasteneth that he may be Loosed, and that he should not Die in the Pit, nor his Bread should fail.*

Again,

Again, read on, *This is to give us a Nail in his holy Place*; and it is repeated, vers. 9. *To give us a Reviving to Set up the house of our God, and to Repair the Desolations thereof, and to give us a Wall in Judah and Jerusalem*: Let all of us now see to it,

that † we Despise not, as formerly, Gods Holy things; and that we yield our selves unto the Lord, and Enter into his Sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever;

† Ezek. 22.8.
* Hag. 1.
2, 3, 4.
&c.

* And according to our Light, and in our Places, Mind the Building of his House, and Mourn over the Spiritual Desolations thereof: *Sion*, in this sence, is a Wilderness in too many places, and amongst too many of Us. And then this is added, *That God may Lighten our eyes, and give us a little Reviving in our Bondage. Which Lightening*

ing of eyes, Ah that it may also reach the eyes of our Understanding; that through the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the eyes of our understandings may be opened, and our Faith in the Lord Jesus Increased: That when Fiery Tryals may come, such as the Primitive and Latter Churches also have seen, shall come; we may then, both Rich and Poor, all be like the Wise Merchant, *Who when he had found the Pearl of great price, went and sold all, that he might Buy it.* And that we may do this also with Joy, and full choice of heart: hating Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Brethren, Sisters; yea, our own Lives also, taking up the Cross, and following Christ, like *Disciples indeed*, Beloved and Taught of God, according to the Promise of the New-Covenant. *Amen.*

Remember

(25)

Remember (I beseech you) still
in Prayer my Bonds, The grace of
our Lord Jesus Christ be with you,
Amen.

F. H.

FINIS.

Mary Carthorn

m

F. H.

m

m

21/17